Farm Notes.

SUNSHINE FOR FOWL.

The fact is very suggestive that the egg supply falls off most rapidly while the days are shortening, and smallest always during the months when the hours of sunshine are the fewest. No preparation for getting eggs in winter is complete which does not provide, besides warmth and good feeding, a plentiful supply of sunshine.

SUPPLIES OF FUEL.

A good farmer or householder will keep an adequate supply of fuel ready for use at all times. This can be done when men and teams are not otherwise busy, while if only enough is got for present needs the supply is sure to give out at the most inopportune time. Where wood is used a supply should be cut a year in advance in order to have it thoroughly seasoned.

FALL BLOOMING OF FRUIT.

It is rare that fruit trees bloom in even the warmest and latest falls unless the foliage has been injured earlier in the season. As growth cannot proceed naturally in the extension of the present year's shoots, the sap starts into activity buds intended for next year's fruiting. This, of course, destroys the crop for next year, and usually seriously injures the vitality of the tree.

RATS AND MICE IN CORNCRIBS.

The cornerib should be thoroughly cleaned of all rubbish, as well as of old corn, before new is put in. The object of this is to destroy rats and mice, which harbor under such protection, and getting in a well-filled crib would increase enormously before spring, with no chance for destroying them. If we have not rat or mice-proof cribs, it is at least an advantage to begin the year with cribs free from this kind of vermin.

LATE SEEDING WITH TIMOTHY.

If the surface is in fine tilth timothy seed may be sown almost until time for freezing up of the ground. It will be covered sufficiently by freezing and thawing of the soil in winter and without injury to the seed. It is much more hardy than clover or any kind of grain. But this late-sown timothy will not be forward enough to cut next season. With a winter grain crop this is an advantage, as in too large a growth of grass the grain is often injured.

EXTRA FEED FOR COWS.

As cold weather approaches, it will require the best efforts of farmers to prevent serious shrinkage of milk. Some loss is unavoidable, but if the yield falls off greatly it shows that the cow gets insufficient food, and this will make her poor and decrease her value for another year. If the cow is with calf it is not best to give her food for stimulating milk flow for three or four months before her time for calving. Trying to get all the profit there is in a cow in one season spoils her usefulness for one or two years after.

DRAINING SINK-HOLES.

Just before winter farm help may be hired more cheaply than during the busier season. It is probably the best time to do odd jobs that have been neglected from year to year. Wet places in fields that can not be got at while covered with crops may be drained, and if the field has been cultivated during the summer much of the work may be done with teams and plow. When the drain is lowered as much as possible by these means twelve to eighteen inches additional may be sunk by hand, and stone or tile laid for a water-course. The filling-in may be done almost with the plow.

KEEPING WINTER PEARS.

Pears require greater care in handling and management to make them keep well than any other fruit. Many are lost in summer from being left to ripen on the tree, when, expecting the Bartlett, most of them will decay at the centre before being soft outside. Winter pears are scarcely ever appreciated in the fall. Hard and worthless as they seem, they will ripen up if kept in a dark, cool place, bringing a few into greater warmth to hasten ripening until all are gone.

EARLY-CUT HAY.

If hay were cut earlier horses could be kept on it with less grain. It has at this time the sweet, rich juices which as grass ripens harden into woody fibre and become nearly worthless. It is a mistake to suppose that early-cut hay is more liable to injury in curing. Though wet with rains and badly colored it is much better than it looks. Overripe hay, on the contrary, is nearly ruined by exposure to rains. When dried out and wet its soluble parts are easily wasted and grain has to be fed to make good the loss. Mr. Terry of Ohio has for five years kept his horses without grain, and they have been fat while at hard work all the time. With ordinary late-cut hay this could not be done. The crop of early hay will not be less per acre, but with clover, two and even more cuttings may be made in a season.

SMUT IN CORN.

The black mould found on corn is not a disease of the grain, but a fungus growth on its surface, the same as rust on wheat. In wet weather it absorbs the juices of the ear, drying up finally and leaving millions of spores, which find a lodgement and are ready next season to reproduce themselves. If care is taken not to carry any smutty ears to the cornerib or the barnyard, the fungus may be exterminated. It should not be fed to stock, as it will get into the manure and be carried on the corn ground in the spring. If corn is grown after corn the disease becomes very prevalent, showing that the spores live in winter on the ground, or more probably on or under pieces of corn stubble.

ASSORTING PIGS.

In a large litter of pigs there are always one or two runts or underlings, and as they grow older the disparity is apt to increase rapidly by the stronger crowding the weaker away from the teat while suckling, and later from the feeding troughs. Before they are old enough to wean the tendency of a few to get ahead of the remainder will require some watching to prevent the weaker from being stunted. Nothing is quite so good for young pigs as their mother's milk. When old enough to wean take off the best and put them in a separate pen with abundance of good food. Keep the the remainder with the sow one or two weeks longer, or until it has evened up somewhat with the others. It will be impossible even with the best care to make the poorer pigs equal to those that first took the lead. The effect of high feeding, however, will make them fatten rather than grow. If this is found to be the case kill them for pig pork before severe cold weather comes. There is more profit in such pigs by killing them early than by trying to keep over winter.

KEEPING SEED-CORN.

The keeping of the corn is as important as the gathering of it. It is true that good keeping will not make good seed of poor corn, corn improperly selected, but on the other hand, poor keeping will destroy the best seed. The secret of good keeping lies in getting and keeping the corn dry. A very low temperature will not injure the germ if it is not surrounded by moisture, whereas a temperature no lower than the freezing point will destroy enough germs to make the corn unfit for planting if it is damp at the time. The corn must be well cured after it is gathered, and for curing there is no better place that some out building where there is a free circulation of the air. The corn should be spread out not more than one ear deep on boards some distance from the ground, if near the ground it will be very slow to cure, as it will absorb moisture from the earth. Often it requires corn longer to cure out than a person supposes. Some few years ago a very careful farmer gathered a fine lot of seed-corn in the fall, and, as he thought, cured it out thoroughly before he put it away for the winter. One day in the winter he went to look at it, and when he uncovered it was greatly astonished to find it covered with frost, it had not absorbed the moisture after being put away; the moisture had always been in it After corn is completely cured out it matters little how or where it is kept, so that it does not absorb moisture and vermin do not infest it. Of course very low temperatures are to be avoided, yet cold will have little effect upon it if it is perfectly free from moisture. It is the combination of cold and moisture that proves fatal to the germ.—*The Maryland Farmer.*

INJURIOUS MILK ODORS—HOW TO PREVENT OR GET RID OF THEM.

At the ninth annual meeting of the New York Darymen's Association the subject of disagreeable and injurious odors in milk was brought up by B. D. Gilbert, who stated that a friend had a dairy which produced the richest of milk, and, although the milk was rich, it smelled very strongly of the stable, yet everything about the stable was perfectly clean. Why should the milk smell so strong of the stable, and be so disagreeable to drink?

Prof. Arnold remarked in reply as follows: "You may lay it down as a certainty that the stable is not properly ventilated. An animal will take in an odor into any of its liquid secretions at once, and most readily through its breath. A cow barely smelling of onions will have onion taste in her milk immediately. I saw last summer a cow tethered to the leeward of a lot of onions, and in a little while her milk tasted so strongly of onions that it was unfit to use."

"A cow going into a stable filled with air permeated with the odor from solid and liquid excrements, will inhale that effluvia and carry it into her milk in fifteen minutes after the exposure: You cannot only smell the odor, but you can taste it. Winter milking demands proper ventilation of the stables."

"Stables should be so ventilated that the air designed for ventilation should come into the tie-up in front of the cows, and go out upwards behind them. Most people ventilate at the rear of the cows, thus driving the effluvia of the offal past their heads into the middle of the cow-barn, going up and passing off in that way. Others shut the cows up so tight that the odor cannot get away. Then the air becomes loaded with it, and it is carried into the secretions as effectually as though you had taken some of the offal and thrown it into the pail, or the cow had put her foot into the pail."

"I went into a very expensively-built stable a few years ago, where no outlay had been spared in the arrangements for getting rid of the manure and for keeping the cattle warm. The most convenient arrangement was made for feeding ensilage, but the windows were kept behind the cows, and ventilation passed off in front of them. I suggested to the owner that this was the reason why there was a stable taste in his milk, butter and cheese. I informed him that the air should come in at the cows' heads, and go out loaded with foul matter where it would not reach the nostrils of the animals. It is a health-producing cause to have fresh air come in front of individuals or animals."

"Cows exposed to this impure air may be turned out and milked in the open air and it will still have the objectionable flavor. You may take such milk in a bottle as drawn from the cow and carry it out of the stable, it will still have the bad flavor. I have taken it in my mouth from the cow and it had the objectionable taste."

Major Alvord disagreed with Prof. Arnold, believing the milk far more susceptible to taint from the air than through the animal. He believed it comparatively easy to deodorize and disinfect the milk after coming from the animal. He believed that although an animal may have become tainted, the milk would be free from odor and taint if the animal were milked in the open air where there was a good stiff breeze. Tainted milk, if from odors, may be purified by thorough oxidation, through milking in the open air, or, if that be not practicable, by airing and cooling the milk. Faults of feeding or ventilation may render milk through a tainted atmosphere extremely disagreeable, and spoil it, yet it may be perfectly good in case it is drawn in fresh air under proper conditions.—*The Maryland Farmer.*

WINTER POTATO HOUSE.

Some one of your subscribers wants a plan for a potato house. If he is really in earnest I propose to give him the best and cheapest plan for a potato house he could ever get, and not only to him but to all potato-growers throughout the South. I have used it for several years and find the plan perfectly safe from rot or damage. I got it from an old farmer of forty years experience, who says he never lost forty bushels during the whole forty years. I have given it to farmers in Alabama, who have tried the plan with perfect success and satisfactory results. With several years experience I find no plan to equal it, although it is so incredible to inexperienced farmers that few will try it. Nevertheless, I will give it, and if farmers lose their fine crop of potatoes now on hand they alone will be to blame if they fail to adopt it.

Bank up in the old fashioned way using pine straw and leaves next to the potatoes, and then cover over with corn stalks so as to turn water. Cover the whole with earth six inches deep, running the hill up to a sharp point, having no ventilation at the top or elsewhere. Do this as soon as dug out of the ground, or the same day; cover with nothing in the way of a shed covering not even a plank on the top. Let them take the weather as it comes, and if you dont have potatoes as long as they will last, well preserved and sound until used up you will have a different experience from mine and many others who have tried the experiment. The nature of sweet potatoes is to live excluded from the atmosphere, or else they would have grown upon the earth instead of in the earth. Going through a sweat is necessary to sweetness and does not damage the potatoes. I have written thus plainly that I may be understood by farmers who have fine crops of potatoes.—*S. G. Robertson in Southern Cultivator.*

SELECTING SEED CORN.

The losses that occur every year from the employment of defective or inferior seed corn ought to impress every farmer with the necessity of a careful selection of seed at time of harvesting the crop. While the corn is yet standing in the fields this selection can readily and judiciously made, but the corn once in the bins the farmer labors under serious disadvantages. In selecting seed four points should be taken into consideration—first, earliness of maturity; second, number of ears upon a stalk; third, size of stalks; and fourth, perfection of the ears. Like produces like with seed as with animals. One cannot expect to produce a large crop of corn when, for instance, five stalks have grown in a hill and but one has borne an ear. Every farmer knows that such corn is useless for seed.

The best ear for seed corn is the one that is uniform in size throughout its entire length, with straight rows and well-formed grains the entire length.

Seed corn must be gathered before freezing weather and placed where it will begin immediately to dry. In the northern belt of States this drying question is an important one, for if the corn—especially the larger varieties—be not subjected to favorable conditions for drying, so that the seed corn will become thoroughly cured, cob included, it will result in failure through lack of germinating powers, while if properly cured it will sprout and grow under any condition.

Many farmers after having sun-dried their seed corn store it in the lofts of their smoke houses in order that it may become permeated with the creosote from the smoke there, and thus gain a protection, when planted, against the depredations of field mice, worms and squirrels.—*N. Y. World.*

TO KEEP SWEET POTATOES.

Sweet potateos can be kept by placing them in bulk in a bin or box (the more the better) without drying, and maintaining for them a uniform temperature of 45° to 50°. Putting something between, among, or around them may serve to keep them at the proper temperature, but it is of no value whatever aside from this; and if it should retain dampness, it will be a positive injury. After the sweat takes place, say in three or four weeks, scatter over them a light covering of dry loam or sand. In this way it is easy to keep sweet potatoes for table use or for seed, as well as the "inferior and less nourishing Irish potato." Another way is to pack in barrels, and pour in kiln-dried sand until the intervals are full or boxes of uniform size, piled up on the side of a room where the temperature never falls to the freezing point, which is a condition of first importance. This wall of boxes may be papered over, and left undisturbed till spring, when the potatoes will command the highest prices.—*The Maryland Farmer.*

DON'T WASTE LIQUID MANURE.

The value of liquid manure upon lawn, grass. young grain, cabbages, turnips, spinach and strawberries, applied in autumn, and to many more crops in spring, is perhaps theoretically understood by many people, but very seldom experimentally demonstrated in actual use. Like a great many other things it involves a little trouble at the outset. At the east we had a wet season up to the first part of August, at least. A small amount of water carrying a very little manure-water produces a marked effect; in fact, water alone is a great thing, and with a proper cart very easy to apply. Manure-water is easily made. A sunken hogshead in the barnyard, covered with a lot of white oak saplings four or five inches through, will fill up with the first rain and be strong enough to make the crops laugh over an acre or more of land if mixed with plenty of water. The application should not be stronger than one-fourth manure-water to three parts water. Nitrate of soda may be very effectively applied in this way, say one pound to ten gallons of water, or three pounds to the barrel.—*American Agriculturist.*

TO KEEP ONIONS.

Gather in fall and remove the tops; then spread upon a barn floor or in any open shed, and allow them to remain there until thoroughly dry. Put into barrels or small bins or boxes, and place in a cool place, and at the approach of cold weather cover with straw or chaff, if there is danger of severe freezing.

Onions are often injured in the winter by keeping them in too warm a place. They will seldom be injured by frost if kept in the dark, and in tight barrel or boxes, where not subjected to frequent changes of temperature. It is the alternate freezing and thawings that destroy them, and if placed in a position where they will remain frozen all winter, and then thawed out slowly and in a dark place, no considerable injury would result from this apparently harsh treatment. Onions should always be stored in the coolest part of the cellar, or put in chaff and set in the barn or some outhouse.—*The Maryland Farmer.*

FARMERS' GATHERINGS.

No class of our citizens can make a success of their calling without sociable gatherings, consultations, discussions and planning for their mutual good.

We see this in all the trade unions the Knights of Labor, the various organizations of manufacturers, the dealers in special commodities, and even in the political parties.

The same holds good with the Farmers. They must get together, consult, discuss and plan. They must go even further than this; they must make plans and carry them out.

Organized effort will accomplish vastly more than any known method of proceeding; and there are many and great objects which the farmers should endeavor to bring about.

The first step, however, is for them to institute gatherings, clubs, small societies, meetings of every description, and may the coming winter find such in every neighborhood.—*New Farm.*

PEANUTS.

We see that the peanut crop of of 1886 is estimated at about 3,500,000 bushels—worth about $3,000,000. Of this important crop, Virginia raises 2,500,000 bushels, and the culture of this nobby nut is confined to about a half a dozen counties in the south eastern corner of the State. Of the 2,500,000 bushels raised in Virginia, it is quite safe to say that this city (Norfolk) will handle nearly 2,000,000 bushels. The crop is annually growing in importance as new uses are found for the nut and also for the vines. The nut brings a fair profit, equal to corn. The vine is nearly or quite as valuable as clover hay—and after the nuts are dug enough still remain in the ground to offer sufficient inducement to the hogs to root the ground over thoroughly and to fatten at the same time. It is—for Virginia—an important crop, and brings annually, large sums of money into the State from abroad.—*Norfolk Cornucopia.*

—There are in the employment of the government 550 Smiths, 360 Browns, 320 Johnsons and 270 Joneses.